

July 10, 2023

To the Honorable Judge Dana L. Christiansen,

This letter is intended to apprise you of my personal knowledge of Kevin Patrick Smith, who has plead guilty to threats against Senator Jon Tester.

I have known Kevin personally for nine years. He placed an ad in the paper for what I remember to be a handyman, remodeler and builder. My husband called him, interviewed him and realized very quickly that he had many skills that would fit well with our business of building swimming pools and spas. He had his own company, insurance, business license, and had taken some college courses to familiarize himself with how to set up a business legally. He, with our prompting, took several Pentair equipment classes and educated himself on how to fine-tune his business so that he could do service work for many of our clients, as well as many of the new clients he found on his own. We were very impressed with his ex-marine attitude of not if something could be accomplished, but **how**.... to overcome all obstacles in all situations.

Kevin had a growing family and a wife who suffered physical challenges as she was in pain all the time. I saw firsthand that he was a very involved father, and the primary cook in his family. I also witnessed his extreme frustration as his marriage disintegrated, ended in divorce, and an ugly custody battle developed over his youngest son. His other children were grown at the time, but chose to live with him.

We subcontract Kevin fairly regularly for nine years and during that time I in no way was aware of his political beliefs, nor was I aware of any anger issues. When his choices to harass and threaten Senator Tester became aware to myself, I was absolutely shocked. This is not the person that I have grown to know over the years.

I really do not understand what is at the base of his frustrations, but I do know at the time this was happening income was diminishing because it was winter. His lovely new wife told me that he was growing more and more frustrated as his youngest son was not being raised in the way they believed he should be. I think he was pushed to the brink. This is in no way acceptable behavior for a member of society and I trust that whatever you decide is Kevin's fate is going to be fair. Personally, I think that Kevin would be best served with therapy and probation than in prison. I feel strongly that his son and his family want and need him and I believe he will work hard to try to make up for his unfortunate choices.

Thank you for this opportunity to give you a little insight into the relationship I have had with Kevin Smith. As I said prior, I trust whatever you decide will be fair and just.

Respectfully.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christy Erickson". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'C' and a long, sweeping underline.

Christy Erickson